

CITY OF MUSKEGON  
**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**MINUTES**

**July 7, 2020**

S. Radtke called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m. and roll was taken.

MEMBERS PRESENT: S. Radtke, T. Emory, K. George, L. Wood, A. Riegler

MEMBERS ABSENT: T. Painter, K. Panozzo excused

STAFF PRESENT: J. Pesch, R. Cummins

OTHERS PRESENT: D. J. Warren, 1218 Ransom; D. Warren, 123 W. Larch; Ant. Figueroa and Ana. Figueroa, 100 Diana; D. Black, K. Jawor, and S. Dahlstrom, 511 W. Clay

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Postponed until in-person meetings resume.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of June 2, 2020 was made by K. George, supported by L. Wood and approved with S. Radtke, T. Emory, K. George, L. Wood, and A. Riegler voting aye.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Case 2020-11 – 1218 Ransom Street (Sign).** Applicant: All Signs LLC (representing Bethel New Life Ministry. District: McLaughlin. Current Function: Institutional. J. Pesch presented the staff report. The applicant is seeking approval to install a new, 4’x5’ aluminum panel sign supported by 4”x4” steel posts along the Ransom Street side of the property. D. J. Warren was in attendance to represent the case.

A motion that the HDC approve the request to install a new, 4’x5’ aluminum panel sign supported by 4”x4” steel posts along the Ransom Street side of the property as long as the work meets all zoning requirements and the necessary permits are obtained was made by L. Wood, supported by S. Radtke and approved with S. Radtke, T. Emory, K. George, L. Wood, and A. Riegler voting aye.

**Case 2020-12 – 123 W. Larch Avenue (Fence).** Applicant: Debra Warren. District: Jefferson. Current Function: Residential. J. Pesch presented the staff report. The applicant is seeking approval to replace an existing chain link fence with a six-foot tall cedar stockade fence, which will extend to the sidewalk. The applicant also plans to add a four-foot tall cedar picket fence around the

remainder of the yard. A drawing showing the site plan for the stockade fence layout was provided. D. Warren was in attendance to represent the case.

A. Riegler asked where the existing chain link fence was located. J. Pesch stated that it was located in the back yard, directly behind the house. D. Warren stated that the proposed fence did not follow the HDC local standards, but she hoped to create additional enclosed, private space for her family in the side yard; she was willing to alter the proposed layout of the fence and/or the proposed style of the fence to be more open near the top, if requested.

A. Riegler noted that the board would need to find a balance because of the location of the proposed fence and the applicant's goals. D. Warren stated that other fences in the historic district were six-foot tall, but the top two feet were lattice instead of solid privacy fence, and that she thought that may be a good middle ground for the proposed layout. A. Riegler stated that the local standards mention using landscaping to soften the appearance of the six-foot fence, in addition to keeping the upper portion of the fence more open and transparent.

A motion to approve the request to replace an existing chain link fence with a six-foot tall cedar stockade fence, with two feet of transparent fence from 4' to 6' and landscaping on the street side of the fence, and to add a four-foot tall cedar picket fence around the remainder of the yard as presented in the July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020 HDC Staff Report as long as the work meets all zoning requirements and the necessary permits are obtained was made by A. Riegler, supported by S. Radtke and approved with S. Radtke, T. Emory, K. George, L. Wood, and A. Riegler voting aye.

**Case 2020-13 – 100 Diana Avenue (Windows and New Construction). Applicant: Antonio Figueroa. District: McLaughlin. Current Function: Residential.** J. Pesch presented the staff report. The applicant is seeking approval to 1) demolish and rebuild the 8'x18' room on the back of the house, 2) remove the existing wood windows and replace them with new windows, and 3) remove and rebuild the front steps to be 8'-wide. Ant. Figueroa and Ana. Figueroa were in attendance to represent the case.

S. Radtke requested that the discussion be separated into the three parts of the request, beginning with the request to demolish the 8'x18' room on the back of the house. Ant. Figueroa explained that the portion of the house he was requesting to demolish was in such bad condition that demolition and new construction was the best option to make that area safe.

J. Pesch explained the annotated drawing of the new construction included in the HDC Staff Report's Case 2020-13 – 100 Diana – Supplemental Application Info (attached below), and that it would be sided on the exterior to match the rest of the house on the upper portion while the lower portion would be finished with paneling similar to what surrounds the picture window on the west side of the house. Ana. Figueroa stated that there would only be two windows in that space on the back of the house, one on each side of the new door, once the room was rebuilt, and that the new construction would have the same shed roof as the existing room.

K. George noted that the existing room that was planned to be demolished was probably not originally enclosed because it lacked a foundation. T. Emory stated that it was likely an open porch that was closed in at some point. Ant. Figueroa stated that he planned to pour ten total

footings to support the new, 10'x18' room planned to be constructed. K. George noted that the new construction would likely need a full foundation rather than footings because it would be a room, A. Riegler agreed. K. George noted that the rest of the house had a brick foundation, and Ant. Figueroa stated that there was a mix of brick and block making up the foundation of the house, as a result of past repairs. K. George stated that the material used for a new foundation in the back of the house was less of a concern since it would not be very visible from the street, A. Riegler agreed.

The board moved on to discuss the window replacement. A. Riegler asked if the windows were operable. Ant. Figueroa stated that most of the glass on the windows were broken and that the replacement windows he was proposing would not affect any existing window trim. K. George noted that the replacement windows would be evenly divided like the existing windows, but that the grills on the new windows would not match the two-over-two configuration of the existing windows. S. Radtke stated that he would rather see one-over-one replacement windows because of the architecture of the house, K. George and A. Riegler agreed. S. Radtke noted that the applicant was requesting to shorten the upper windows by 11" and J. Pesch stated that the bases of five 66"x29" windows on the second story were proposed to be raised 11" higher. Ant. Figueroa stated that they were currently 8" above the floor. K. George noted that code would require tempered glass in new windows less than 18" from the floor for safety reasons and asked what the exterior would look like if the base of the window was raised up. Ant. Figueroa stated that he would match the existing paneling surrounding the window on the side of the house at the bases of the new windows. K. George stated that adding the raised panels below the windows would significantly change the appearance of the house. A. Riegler noted that changing the size of the window openings is strongly discouraged by the HDC local standards, and that such requests are rarely, if ever, approved in a situation like this. She suggested that window guards or special locks could be installed on the interior to provide a level of safety without affecting the exterior appearance. S. Radtke agreed that the proposed change would drastically alter the appearance of the house and was concerned about losing the tall windows that are common to the Italianate style. K. George noted that the tempered glass would raise the cost of the windows, but would be easier with a single pane in the bottom of the window. S. Radtke stated that, while he did not prefer replacing original windows, if the board approved replacement windows due to the age of the windows, apparent poor maintenance in past years, and the cost of custom made windows with a two-over-two configuration, he would be willing to allow a one-over-one configuration for the replacement windows in the interest of maintaining some semblance of the original intent of the architecture.

A. Riegler requested that the HDC provide documents on restoring old wood windows to the applicant because they planned to complete the work on the house. Both A. Riegler and S. Radtke noted that restoration of wood windows was not especially difficult, but that it was tedious. The board discussed the cost benefits, energy efficiency (especially with well-fitted storm windows), and general simplicity of restoring wood windows. J. Pesch stated that Staff would send information to the applicant about restoring wood windows.

The board moved on to discuss the request to rebuild the front porch steps. Ant. Figueroa stated that the existing stairs were five feet wide but that he was requesting to rebuild them to be eight feet wide in the same location. K. George asked if a portion of the knee wall next to the column

would need to be removed. Ant. Figueroa stated that he planned to cut back the wall and shift the left column three feet to the left. K. George and A. Riegler stated that they were not in favor of shifting the column to accommodate the wider stair as it would affect the proportion and scale of many other parts of the house. S. Radtke stated that he would be ok with the request if it only involved cutting the knee wall back to the column, but not with changing the location of the column. T. Emory noted that changing the location of the column would cause the peak of the porch roof above the front door to be off-center. K. George suggested that the steps could flair out to be wider at the bottom.

A motion that the HDC approve the request to 1) demolish and rebuild the 8'x18' room on the back of the house in the layout provided in the July 7th, 2020 HDC Staff Report's Case 2020-13 – 100 Diana – Supplemental Application Info, 2) remove the existing wood windows and replace them with new windows in a one-over-one configuration in the same size and dimensions as the original openings with the recommendation that, where possible, the existing wood windows be restored instead of replaced, and 3) remove and rebuild the front steps to match the current 5' width as long as the work meets all zoning requirements and the necessary permits are obtained was made by A. Riegler, supported by S. Radtke and approved with S. Radtke, T. Emory, K. George, L. Wood, and A. Riegler voting aye.

#### **Case 2020-13 – 100 Diana – Supplemental Application Info**

The steps up to the front porch will be rebuilt to resemble exactly what is there now, but are proposed to be eight feet wide (photo in Staff Report).

Replace a total of 15 wood windows with vinyl windows of the same size. Those windows are of the following dimensions (those to be changed are in **bold**):

- Living room 78"x29" = 3 windows
- Master bedroom 78"x29" = 1 window
- Master bathroom 66"x29" = 1 window
- Kitchen 44"x36" = 1 window
- **Laundry room 55"x28" = 2 windows Does not match existing window configuration**
- Stairs 53"x20" = 1 window
- Stairs 55"x29" = 1 window
- **Bedroom #1 actual size 66"x29" = 3 windows Possible change to 55"x29"**
- **Bedroom #2 actual size 66"x29" = 1 window Possible change to 55"x29"**
- **Bedroom #3 actual size 66"x29" = 1 window Possible change to 55"x29"**

Quantity	Product Description
8	Premium, Double Hung, 28.5 x 77.5
Opening: 29 x 78	Assembly = Full Unit, Country Where Unit Will Be Installed = USA, Impact Rating = Not Impact, Performance Grade Rating = PG35, DP+35/-40, Installation & Frame Type = Without Nailing Flange, Exterior Finish = White, Interior Finish = White, Measurement Type = Rough Opening, Rough Opening Width = Custom, Custom Rough Opening Width = 29, Rough Opening Height = 78", Actual Size = 28 1/2 -in X 77 1/2 -in, Sash Split = Even Divide, Lower Sash Height = 39 Lifetime Accidental Glass Breakage Coverage = No, Glass Energy Efficiency = Energy Star, Installation Zip Code = 49444, Energy Star Zone = Energy Star - Northern, High Altitude (above 3500 feet) = No, Glass Glazing = Double Pane, Low-E Coating Choice = Low-E 180, Glass Color/Texture = Clear, Glass Type = Standard, Air Space Options = Argon, Select Glass Thickness = Standard Default Thickness, Grille Type = 5/8" Flat, Grille Location in Glass = All Glass, Grille Finish = White, Grille Pattern = Colonial, Number of Squares Wide = 2, Number of Squares High - Panel 1 = 3, Number of Squares High - Panel 2 = 3 Screen Options = Yes, Full or Half Screen = Full Screen, Select Screen Mesh Type = Fiberglass Mesh, Lock Hardware Type = Style Cam Lock(s), Number of Locks = 1 Lock, Hardware Finish - Interior = White Does Unit Meet Egress Requirements? = Meets 5.7 sqft Eg Secondary Vent Stop = No, Exterior Frame Accessories = Slope Sill Adaptor, Sloped Sill Adaptor Applied or Loose = Loose, Interior Frame Accessories = None, Jamb Installation Clip = No Jamb Installation Clips U-Factor = 0.3, Solar Heat Gain Coefficient = 0.45, Visible Light Transmittance = 0.54, Condensation Resistance = 58, CPD# = JEL-A-899-00442-00001 Is this a Reorder? = No 5/8" Flat, Colonial, 2W3H
Unit Size: 28.5 x 77.5	
None Assigned	
Unit is viewed from the outside looking in.	
<p>White</p> <p>2W3H</p>	

As noted in the list above, five of the windows in the second floor bedrooms are proposed to be replaced with windows that are shortened by 11" at the base, as shown in the below photos:



Bedroom window to be raised up



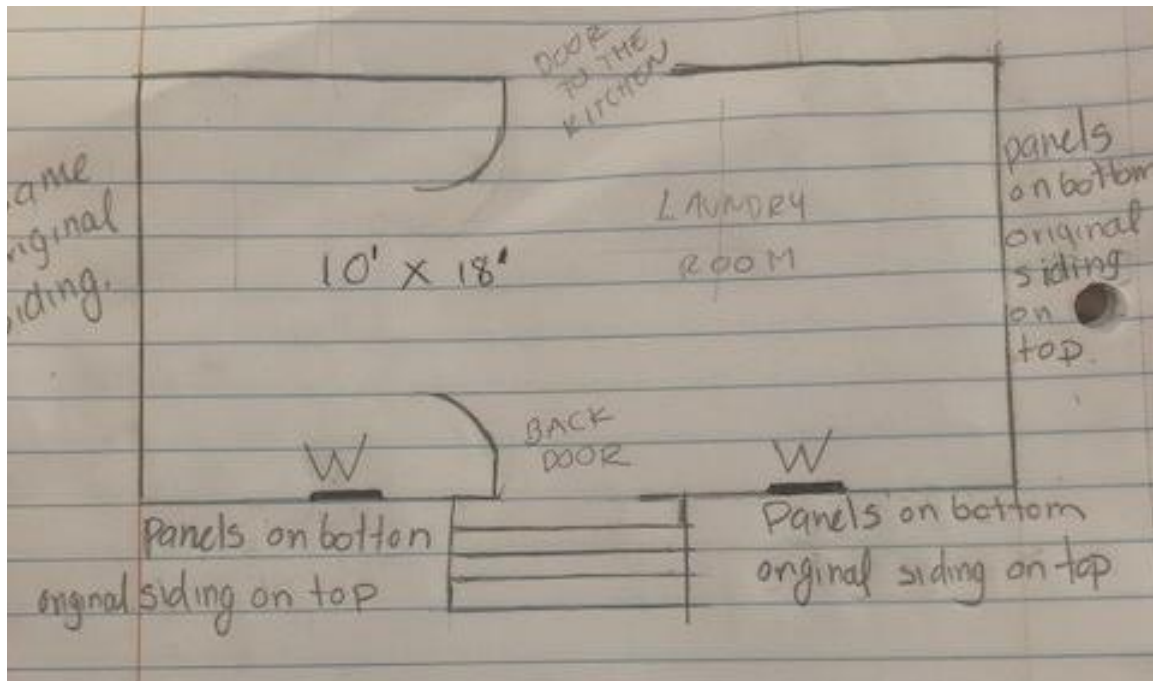




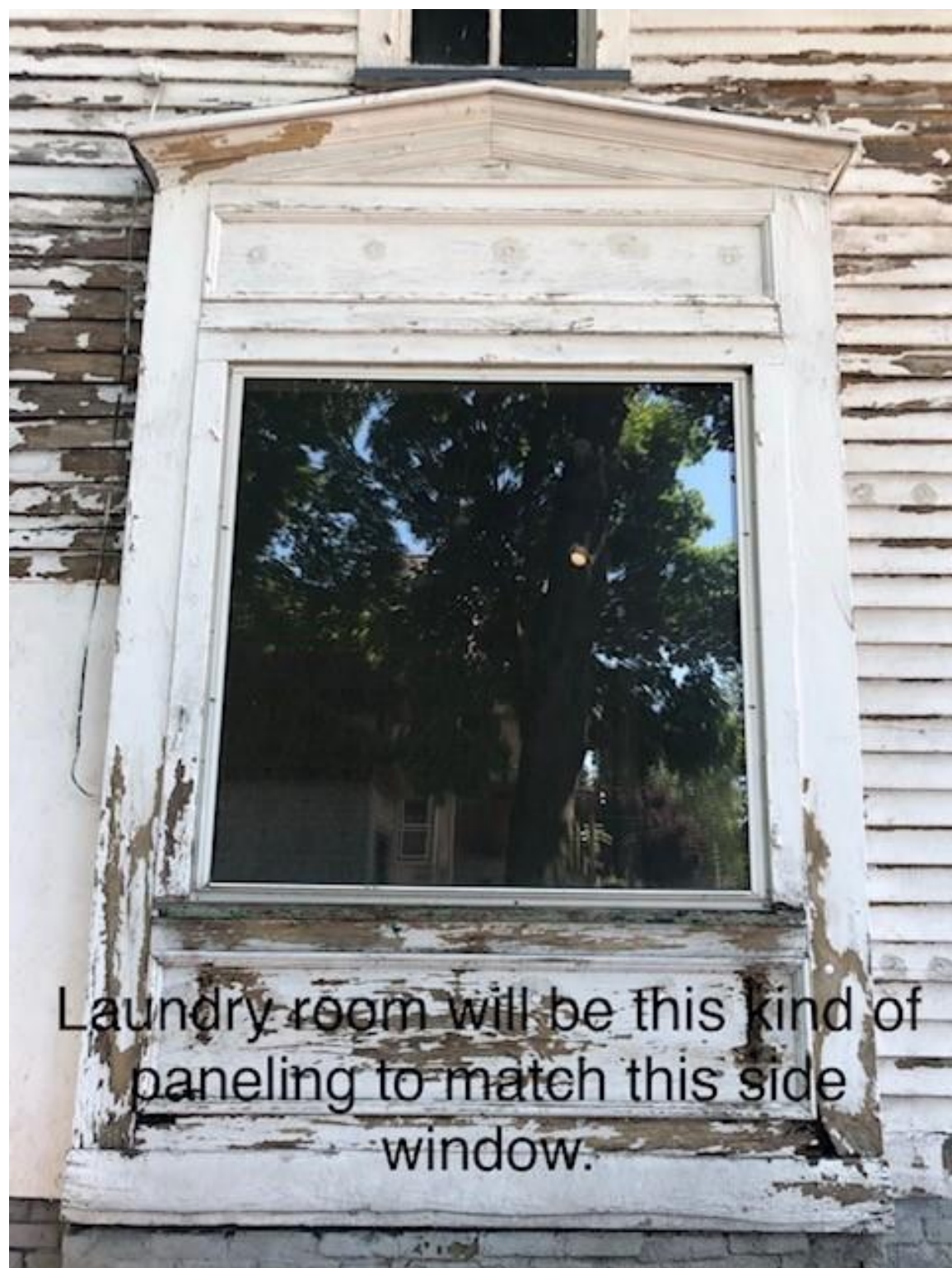
Bedroom window raised up  
approx. 11"



The 8'x18' room proposed to be demolished will be rebuilt to be 10'x18' with fewer total windows than exist currently as shown in the below drawing:



The rebuilt room on the back of the house will match the existing siding on the upper portion, with panels (similar to what is shown in the photo below) on the lower portion, on the rear facade. The right side will also match the existing siding on the upper portion with panels on the lower portion. The left side next to the garage will match the existing siding.



Laundry room will be this kind of paneling to match this side window.

**Case 2020-14 – 511 W. Clay Avenue (New Construction - Porch Roof).** Applicant: Jennifer Weaver/J&J Corner Properties, LLC. District: McLaughlin. Current Function: Residential. J. Pesch presented the staff report. The applicant is seeking approval to add a small roof over the existing side porch as well as a small roof over the door into the garage; both will match the existing, decorative porch roof on the east side of the house. D. Black, K. Jawor, and S. Dahlstrom were in attendance to represent the case.

D. Black explained that the house had four exterior doors, and that three are covered with porch roofs; he stated that the door and porch that are not covered are experiencing considerable damage from being exposed to the weather. S. Radtke asked if stairs would be added to the uncovered porch. D. Black stated that stairs would not be added at this time, but it is anticipated that it will serve as the handicap accessible entry to the house sometime in the future. K. Jawor stated that the porch will need steps and S. Dahlstrom added that the building code would require steps to use that door and porch as an exit. D. Black stated that the stairs and/or ramp would likely face the back side of the property.

A. Riegler noted that the detailing on the new porch roof should be a simplified version of the more ornate porch roof on the east side of the house rather than replicating it exactly to discourage historical conjecture as outlined in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. She continued to acknowledge that the new porch roof should respect the scale and configuration of the original porch, but with a simplified column and cornice.

S. Radtke asked if there was any evidence that there was a covering over the porch originally. D. Black stated that before they acquired the house, there was a full wing in this area of the house containing a separate apartment. J. Pesch stated that the HDC files contained photos of a substantial addition on that side of the house, but that it was removed during a prior restoration to return the house to its original design.

S. Radtke asked if the porch was tall enough to require a railing. S. Dahlstrom stated that the porch is right around 30" high and would likely require a railing. A. Riegler stated that if no changes were made to the porch it would not require a railing, but filing a building permit would likely lead to a railing being required, but not necessarily stairs. S. Radtke stated that the existing railing on the porch on the east side would not meet today's building codes, making it more difficult to replicate that porch's proportions on the proposed porch roof. S. Dahlstrom stated that he did not anticipate needing to install a handrail since steps were not planned at this time.

D. Black stated that they had not finalized plans for the garage door roof at this time, and that the HDC would not need to review that part of the request at this time.

K. George asked if the applicant understood what was requested with regard to simplifying the appearance of the original porch on the east side of the house when designing the new porch roof. A. Riegler explained that the original porch's proportions seen in the levels of the existing cornice and the hierarchy of the existing trim should be used to inform the design of the new porch, but that the dentils and top railing should be left out. She noted that the column was likely simple enough to duplicate in the new porch roof.

A motion that the HDC approve the request to add a small roof over the existing side porch to match the existing proportions of the decorative porch roof on the east side of the house without adding dentils or the additional top railing as long as the work meets all zoning requirements and the necessary permits are obtained was made by A. Riegler, supported by S. Radtke and approved with S. Radtke, T. Emory, K. George, L. Wood, and A. Riegler voting aye.

#### OLD BUSINESS

None

#### OTHER BUSINESS

**Outdoor Mechanical Equipment Local Standards** – J. Pesch provided a draft version of new local standards for outdoor mechanical equipment. The board did not have any further changes to the draft. A motion that the HDC approve a change to the Muskegon Historic District Commission local standards in adopting the Outdoor Mechanical Equipment Guidelines presented at the July 7, 2020 HDC meeting was made by L. Wood, supported by T. Emory and approved with S. Radtke, T. Emory, K. George, L. Wood, and A. Riegler voting aye.

**HDC Staff Approval Fencing Materials** – J. Pesch explained the common requests for and approval of black aluminum fences resembling iron fences in the historic districts. Staff has the ability to approve new fences that meet the HDC local standards, but the local standards do not list a specific reference to this style of fence. Staff and the board discussed the needed changes to the local standards to allow black aluminum fences to be approved by Staff. A motion that the HDC approve updating the Muskegon Historic District Commission local standards to include a reference to black aluminum fencing under the “Iron” fence drawing in the Type “A” Conforming Walls & Fences graphic was made by K. George, supported by T. Emory and approved with S. Radtke, T. Emory, K. George, L. Wood, and A. Riegler voting aye.

Time was allotted for public comment with contact information provided. There were no comments from the public.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:23 p.m.

JP